

# Church Safeguarding Policy

For use of Churches in the Nottingham and Derby District of  
the Methodist Church

Reviewed on 07.09.2023

Based on the

*Methodist Church Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance*  
v. March 2023




Melbourne Methodist Church  
Safeguarding Policy

Date adopted – 30th October 2023

Date to be reviewed – October 2024 or sooner

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The Methodist Church values every human being as part of God's creation. Everyone has the right to fair treatment and protection from harm.

The **Methodist Church**

# Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Methodist Church commits to:

- The creation of a **safe environment and culture** where all are welcome and everyone feels able to speak out about safeguarding concerns
- **Pastoral care for victims and survivors** of abuse, and other people who have been affected by safeguarding issues
- **A prompt and appropriate response** to every safeguarding concern or allegation regardless of status or circumstance
- Carry out **risk assessments** and put **safeguarding measures** in place where individuals may present a risk
- Pastoral care for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations
- **Safe recruitment** of all those who have responsibility for children and adults who may be vulnerable
- **The promotion of good safeguarding practice** through effective training, guidance, policy and procedures

## Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

**This poster contains your policy statement. This poster will be displayed in every Methodist Church. Copies available to download here [Safeguarding Posters](#)**

The District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is  
Rev Susan McIvor [districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk](mailto:districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk) Tel 07434 284633.

The Circuit Safeguarding Officer is  
Mrs Becky Snelson 01530 587251

The Church Safeguarding representative is  
Mrs Ros Smith 01332 863894

## Responsibilities of the Local Church and Charity Trustees

The responsibility for implementation of the policy lies with the Church Council. It is the relevant trustee body and the minister in pastoral charge or Superintendent, who are responsible for ensuring that

- i. The church appoints a Church Safeguarding Officer who is not the minister. A person may be appointed as Church Safeguarding Officer for one or more churches.
- ii. All workers with children, young people and adults are safely recruited, appointed by the Church Council and supported in their roles
- iii. allegations are responded to immediately and according to the procedures of the Methodist Church including referral to the DSO and to the statutory authorities where necessary
- iv. Standing Orders and the Methodist Church Safer Recruitment Policy, Procedures and Guidance are implemented by completing the required DBS checks. Click here: [Safer Recruitment](#)
- v. Standing Orders and the Methodist *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance (March 2023)* is implemented when somebody is being considered for an appointment to a role or responsibility to which Standing Order 010(3) applies, or is already holding such a position and one of the following circumstances applies:
  - the person has a conviction or caution for an offence under the Sexual Offences Act (2003) or mentioned in Schedule 15 of the Criminal Justice Act (2003)
  - or the person has been subject to risk assessment under Standing Order 237 and as a result, the Safeguarding Committee deem that they present a significant risk of serious harm to children or vulnerable adults
- vi. good practice is followed and pastoral care provided in all instances of child or adult abuse and trauma. This includes pastoral provision for the needs of survivors of abuse and careful ministry to those who pose a risk to children.
- vii. When relevant, making a report to the Charity Commission (in England and Wales), the relevant insurance company in respect of serious safeguarding matters (this will always occur in those cases involving possible reputational or financial risks) and the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- viii. notifying the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice where a report has been made to the Charity Commission, relevant insurance company or Disclosure and Barring Service.

*Churches will seek the advice of the DSO for all safeguarding concerns*

## **Responding well to safeguarding concerns**

If we think a person has been harmed, may have been harmed or might be harmed by another person we will

- speak to the DSO on mobile number 07434 284633
- create a written record on the safeguarding concern form available from [here](#)
- You do not need to speak with your minister or church or circuit safeguarding officer first. You will discuss with the DSO who else will be informed.
- You may also make a report to the police, children's services or adult social care before notifying the DSO.

Abuse may be disclosed to us or we may see something happen. We may also be concerned that someone is not following safer working practices. All these are safeguarding concerns which we will report.

- We recognise if someone discloses abuse or suspects abuse we cannot ignore it or do nothing with the information;
- We will respond warmly to the person and listen well to what we are being told;
- Record what was said after the disclosure and sign and date it;
- Refer the concern to the DSO, as soon as possible and within 24 hours (and the statutory agencies if necessary); if the concern is about an adult victim of abuse and they have not consented to the sharing of information we will discuss the concern and receive advice without identifying the victim.

### **If someone wishes to disclose abuse to us**

- We will let them know from the start we may need to tell someone else  
– DON'T PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.
- Accept what the person says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm.
- Look at the person directly.
- Be honest.
- Be aware that the person may have been threatened.
- Never push for information or ask leading questions
- Never ask young people or vulnerable adults to lift up or remove clothing to show you any possible signs of abuse.
- Never photograph injuries
- If an adult discloses abuse of themselves, we will ask what they would like to happen next

Helpful things to say or show

- Show acceptance of what is being said
- I am glad you have told me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will help you.

#### Avoid Saying

- Why didn't you tell someone before?
- I can't believe it.
- Are you sure this is true?
- Never make false promises.
- Never make such statements as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else."

#### Concluding

Clarify what the person says happened: Check out What? When? Who? Where?

Reassure the person that they were right to tell you.

Let the person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.

Contact the DSO on 07434 284633

[districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk](mailto:districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk) or your local Children's Services or Adult Social Care

Do not contact the person about whom the allegations have been made

Further guidance can be found in Section 4 of the Connexional 'Policies, Procedures and Guidance March 2023' found at [Connexional Safeguarding Policy](#)

#### **In an emergency**

The person receiving the information will assess whether the person is at risk of immediate harm and if so, take any action straight away to safeguard them including contacting statutory authorities such as police, child or adult services.

#### **Caring for those who have suffered abuse**

The Methodist Church recognises that abuse of an individual by someone within a church context can have a negative impact not only on the survivor, but on their family, the perpetrator's family and the church community. The impact will be different for different people and assumptions cannot be made about the severity of the impact and its perceived seriousness. The Methodist Church aims to respond to those affected by abuse in accordance with legislation and guidance but also with respect and compassion, providing pastoral support where appropriate.

People receiving or dealing with reports of abuse will also consider whether other forms of support may be appropriate, in addition to or instead of pastoral support within the church. Confidential advice will be sought from the DSO.

Further guidance can be found at *Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance, March 2023, Section 4.3*

**Responding well to those who pose a risk**

Where a concern is passed to the DSO which indicates a person may have harmed another person the DSO will undertake an assessment of risk.

The following risks will be reviewed regularly in regard to any concern raised:

Risk to the victim/survivor

Risks to members of vulnerable groups within the church and involved with church activities

Risks to the person believed to be responsible for the issue and their family

Risks to the wider congregation or attendees at church activities

Risks to the loss of information/records

Risks to the reputation of the Methodist Church.

**Care for those who are subject to concerns or allegations**

The Methodist Church aims to provide pastoral care for all its members, including those who are suspected of causing harm or have caused harm to others. However, in this context, such care will be provided in a way that prioritises the safety of other church members, while enabling the person who may pose a risk, to worship and be a part of the church community. Advice will always be sought from the DSO.

For those with a criminal conviction or caution for a sexual offence, or offences against children and young people, Standing Order 010 bars a person from holding any office, post or responsibility. On occasions this Standing Order may be suspended. Contact the DSO for further advice

Specific procedures are laid down for safeguarding risk assessment (e.g. a safeguarding contract). Further information can be found at, *Safeguarding Policies Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist March 2023*, 4.7.

### **When the DSO receives a safeguarding concern**

she will:

- i. Consider the child's or adult's safety throughout.
- ii. Advise whether a referral to Children's Services or Adult Social Care and/or police and/or Local Authority Designated Officer is necessary and decide with the referrer who will make the referrals.
- iii. Assess the possible risks posed by the person who has allegedly harmed a child or adult;
- iv. Consider whether an interim safeguarding contract is necessary.
- v. Consider whether colleagues from other churches or community organisations need to be informed following advice from Children's Services/Adult Social Care/police (as appropriate).
- vi. Notify the Connexional Safeguarding Team if necessary
- vii. Contact the media office to discuss communications within the local church and circuit.
- viii. Consider support needs of the victim/survivor, family/close friends
- ix. Consider support needs of the accused and their family.
- x. Ensure pastoral support and management of the case is not provided by someone supervising or overseeing the person whose behaviour is of concern.
- xi. Check whether privacy notices have been provided to relevant parties and/or advise when they will be given
- xii. Ensure the church notifies its insurance company (if necessary)
- xiii. When necessary, advise the Chair of the trustees in the local church about whether a Serious Incident Referral to the Charity Commission is required, or if a referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service is necessary. (The DSO may be requested to provide support or undertake the preparation of an initial reporting form)
- xiv. Notify the Conference Office of a Charity Commission referral (if necessary)
- xv. Notify District Chair and Superintendent (as necessary)



## **Procedures for the Management of Safeguarding Information**

Careful attention will be paid to the storage, use and sharing of data held by the church relating to other people. This is critical to ensure that those who engage with safeguarding processes have confidence in the legitimacy and appropriateness of actions taken. The management of information is governed by law, statutory and government guidance.

### **Privacy Notices**

Privacy notices are central to effective data protection practice within safeguarding and they are supplied using standard documents for specific activities such as reporting a safeguarding concern, ongoing safeguarding case management and before undertaking a risk assessment.

The relevant forms can be found here <https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/policies-procedure-and-information/forms/safeguarding-concerns/>

For safeguarding purposes

- i. Care and sensitivity will be shown in issuing Privacy Notices especially where it may be necessary to inform the police/social care of concerns. In these circumstances seek the advice of the DSO before issuing the Privacy Notice.
- ii. If a person shares information about themselves or a third party the person will be issued with a privacy notice as soon as possible.
- iii. If information has been supplied to the church by a third party which relates to another individual, the person to whom the information relates will receive a privacy notice within a reasonable period of the data being received within one month.
- iv. It is the responsibility of the minister in pastoral charge/ Superintendent Minister to issue the privacy notice. The DSO will advise when the privacy notice may be issued.

Guidance for **Data Storage** can be found at section Appendix 4 Connexional Safeguarding Policies Procedures and Guidance (March 2023) (Safeguarding records are usually kept for 75 years)

Advice about what to do in the case of a **Data Breach** can be found at Appendix 4

**Subject Access Requests** for safeguarding are made via Methodist Church House Appendix 4

### **Information sharing requests**

Any request for safeguarding information by another organization or person will be directed to the DSO in the first instance. Safeguarding information will not be shared with another person or organization without consultation with the DSO.

The DSO will follow the procedure as outlines in *Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance, March 2023, Appendix 4*

## Appendix 1: Emergency Contact Numbers for Display

Police (all non-emergency enquiries)	101
Local police Child/Family Protection Unit	
Local council Children's Services/Social Care	
Local Emergency Social Work Team	
Local general hospital	

## Support and Advice Organisations

Childline	0800 1111
Family Lives (helpline for parents)	0808 800 2222
YoungMinds (parents helpline, mental health)	0808 802 5544
Hopeline (suicide support for young people)	0800 068 4141
FRANK (drug and alcohol support)	0300 123 6600

## Local Contacts

District Safeguarding Officer Rev Susan McIvor	07434 284633 <a href="mailto:districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk">districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk</a>
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<p>Circuit safeguarding Officer Mrs Becky Snelson Church Safeguarding Representative Mrs Ros Smith</p>	<p>01530 587251 <a href="mailto:becky.snelson@hotmail.co.uk">becky.snelson@hotmail.co.uk</a>  01332 863894 <a href="mailto:ros1949@btinternet.com">ros1949@btinternet.com</a></p>
<p>Advanced Module training contact Rosie Farrow</p>	<p><a href="mailto:padistrictsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk">padistrictsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk</a> 0115 9375665</p>

This policy was adopted at the Church council Meeting held on ....30/10 / 2024.....

It will be reviewed on 10/2024

Signed.



Chair of Church Council

Dated 30/10/2023.....